



# The **TEA** House Times™



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[www.TeaUSA.org](http://www.TeaUSA.org)  
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## CONNECTIONS

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## Greetings from The TEA House Times!

As the holiday season approaches, I must say that I am truly grateful for all of The Tea House Times writers who have consistently continued to deliver something uplifting throughout this year. Tea is that one thing that helps to center us...when alone, or together. And \*together\* is something I wish for all of us very soon!

This 103rd issue also marks 17 years in publication for The Tea House Times. Since 2003, it has been my passion and pleasure and drive to help tea businesses stay in business and to continue to connect consumers in a meaningful way. 17 years, 103 issues for The TEA House Times, and 12 years for TEACourse.com since 2008! Also ahead of its time, our TEATradeShow.com since 2018 is now very much in demand as a year-round platform for connecting businesses to businesses. What's next in TEA? Just wait and see!

Until we can finally gather again, meanwhile, let's take comfort in some of Karen Donnelly's recipes from Greenhalgh Tea on page 6. That hot spiced tea cider looks super delicious, warm, and comforting. Just what we need!

## SALUTATIONS

If you are yearning a social distanced tea party, see The Red Hat Society on page 10. Virtual membership helps members to continue the fun!

As for myself, I've tried a curbside afternoon tea pick-up from High SocieTea House in Wayne, NJ. It was fantastic! They and other tea rooms have some limited outdoor/indoor seating available now. I encourage you to buy your tea and enjoy afternoon tea from local tea rooms as much as possible. Let's help our favorite places to stay in business! Much love to all this holiday season!



All the best,

*Gail  
Gastelu*

# @WORK

A message from . . .



*Founded in 1899, the Tea Association of the USA, Inc. was formed to promote and protect the interests of the tea trade in the United States and is the recognized independent authority on Tea.*

I know, I know, 2020 has been awful. Let's face it, even if we didn't have COVID, we've had horrible and numerous hurricanes (we've already run out of names as "BETA" approaches our shores); terrible fires in Australia and the Western US; an election year that indicates that the American public is divided like a barbell rather than a bell curve; Locusts... YES, LOCUSTS invading crops; and a spread of the Spotted Lanternfly in the Eastern U.S.

Now, back to the star of our show, COVID-19. We've all been affected by this insidious virus and the Tea World is no different.

Total imports of tea into the U.S.A. through July have been impacted. Black Tea is down by 13.7%, green tea by 11.6% and total down some 13.3%.

In terms of consumption, the food service (restaurants, offices) sector has been decimated, due to stay at home orders and the shutdown of restaurants and offices. Several coffee and tea packers were forced to furlough factory workers due to this precipitous drop in consumption. It is only recently that some improvement is evident.

Retail sellers (grocery, drug/mass merchandisers) saw a strong growth in this same period, as consumers swept the shelves of products that were purchased for at home consumption. Tea sales were very strong as consumers brewed tea for refreshment and, possibly, for its healthful benefits.

RTD is steady with Specialty Tea enjoying strong growth as consumers are using specialty and artisanal teas as personal "for me" indulgences.

Tea's healthful properties and its unique ability to calm us through its preparation "rituals", as well as the natural beneficial components contained in the cup, can serve as our own personal oasis.

I am happily awaiting the time when 2020 will be in my rearview mirror. In the meantime, I'm taking some solace in the indomitable human spirit and, yes, in my cup of tea.

Please stay well and stay safe!



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter F. Goggi".

Peter F. Goggi, President  
Tea Association of  
the U.S.A., Inc.  
**TeaUSA.org**

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A message from . . .



There is something special in a cup of tea that goes beyond the wonderful taste. It is to do with that ahhhh moment we get from drinking tea, which lifts our spirits. If combined with practices such as Sophrology, tea can help us reach an inner Zen. Sophrology, a top lifestyle trend, was developed 60 years ago by Colombian psychiatrist and neurologist, Professor Alfonso Caycedo. He combined yoga, meditation and classical relaxation to enable a person to achieve optimal balance and harmony. Sophrology targets five body zones and daily practice involves a combination of relaxation, breathing, gentle movement and visualisation to reduce tension and stress. Needing no special equipment or even much time, Sophrology is easy to incorporate into daily life.

The goal is to develop a deeper body awareness and use this to unlock harmony between mind, body and soul. Optimal health depends on the right diet, including healthy drinks, exercise and sleep. Practicing Sophrology and drinking tea go together, as they can both bring harmony and balance to our lives by reinforcing the connections between our minds and bodies. Both are enjoyable activities we can look forward to and create positive space for in our hectic lifestyles. So, as the nights draw in and more than ever we need to practice self-care, why not give it a try (be-sophro.com) and combine your practice with drinking your favourite tea?

Close your eyes, notice the presence of your body and invite your body to relax. Sip and savour your tea connecting to the smell and taste. Imagine yourself in the healthiest state possible. If your mind is very active it may take several tries to find that picture. Allow yourself the patience to reap the profound rewards in terms of relaxation and calm and the benefits of drinking tea.



Sharon Hall  
Chief Executive  
UK Tea & Infusions  
Tea.co.uk

A message from . . .



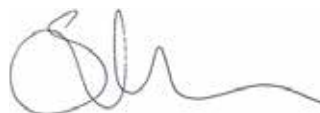
### Pink Tea

I want to share with you a piece of Canadian history that took place, all over a cup of tea. The rights I hold true and for granted today are all in thanks to five extraordinary women. The five women are: Emily Murphy, the British Empire's first female judge; Nellie McClung, Canadian author, social activist, suffragette and politician; Henrietta Edwards, women's right activist and reformer; Louise McKinney, the first woman sworn into the Legislative Assembly and the first woman elected to a legislature in the British Empire and Irene Parlby, the second woman in Canada to hold a provincial cabinet post.

Before 1929, women in Canada were not legally recognised as 'Persons'. These five women banded together and petitioned the Supreme Court to grant women 'persons' status. The case was lost but was appealed to the Privy Council in England; and on October 18, 1929, Canadian women were officially granted legal status as 'Persons'.

Now what does this have to do with tea? At this time, political meetings were looked down upon, disrupted and quite often women were even forbidden to attend them by their husbands. To keep any disrupters out and to divert any attention, the suffragettes held 'Pink Teas' to disguise what was, political meetings. Extra frilly and ultra feminine tea parties is where plans were hatched, and a movement of women changed the lives of all Canadian women forever.

We have come a long way since then and I hope of course that tea will never be used to keep people AWAY from something. But I do take comfort in knowing that our precious tea played a role in allowing these women a safe place to make history.



Shabnam Weber  
President  
Tea and Herbal  
Association of Canada  
Tea.ca



## New England Hermit Bar Cookies

About 24 2" squares

These soft, chewy cookies (similar to gingerbread) have been a favorite in New England homes since the late 1800's. Considered "keepers," Hermits were wrapped and placed in care packages from home to sailors, soldiers and family members settled in far off places. They traveled well and kept for weeks. Easy to make and easy to adjust for personal tastes by switching out raisins to chopped dates or cranberries or adding nuts. Some recipes call for milk or coffee, but in this recipe, we are using a nicely steeped breakfast tea, such as English Breakfast or Assam. Any extra tea can be used to plump the dried fruit before folding in.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease one cookie sheet or use parchment paper.

- 1/2 cup butter or shortening
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 cup warm breakfast tea
- 1 egg
- 3 cups unbleached flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp. ground cloves

1 cup raisins plumped in hot water or tea and drained.

In a large mixing bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until creamy smooth. With the mixer on low, stir in the molasses and egg. Dissolve the baking soda into the tea and add to batter. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, salt, and spices. With the mixer still on low, add in the dry ingredients and then add the raisins. The batter will be sticky. Spoon out the batter on to the cookie sheet. With floured hands, press down the batter evenly, about 1/2" deep, forming a rectangle. It should measure about 12" x 9." Bake 18-20 minutes, until a toothpick comes out clean. When completely cooled, slice into 2" squares.



## Hot Spiced Tea Cider

8 1-cup servings. Easily doubled for a crowd

Family-friendly, wassail simmering on the stove will fill your home with the delicious & welcoming fruits and spices of the season.

- 1 quart apple cider
- 4 cups steeped orange spice black tea
- 1 orange, cut into slices
- 1 apple sliced across and studded with 12 whole cloves
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 2 Tbsp. maple syrup

Extra orange and apple slices and cinnamon sticks for garnishing

Bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Take off heat and add 4 Tbsp. loose leaf (or 5 teabags) orange spice black tea and steep for 5 minutes. Strain and add the steeped tea to a large heavy-bottomed pot. Add 1-quart apple cider, oranges, clove studded apples, and cinnamon sticks. Gently heat through, then simmer for 20 minutes. Stir in maple syrup. Ladle into cups and garnish with slices of apple or orange and cinnamon stick. Preparing ahead for a party? Just strain wassail and add to a vacuum beverage server. Keep garnishes in small bowls on the side with the cups or mugs so guests can help themselves.

For the tea, I used Bigelow's famous Constant Comment. Created in 1945 by Ruth Bigelow, this blend of high grown black teas, orange rind and sweet spices is not only a customer favorite, it is available decaffeinated. Give your own favorite holiday spiced tea or Masala Chai a try in this delicious, warming beverage.



*Karen Donnelly is a certified Tea Association of Canada Tea Sommelier Professional and has been an afternoon tea event planner, speaker and teacher for over 20 years. She is the owner of Greenhalgh Tea, selling premium teas, tea ware, and gifts. Join her for on-line Tea & Cookery classes and classes on tea production styles, preparation and history. See [GreenhalghTea.com](http://GreenhalghTea.com)*

*TheTeaHouseTimes.com | 6 | November/December 2020*

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# Over the River and Through the Woods...

OCCASION

by Kim Hendrickson

Halloween is over. We, adults, start looking forward to Thanksgiving, then Christmas and all the planning those holidays entail. The seasons change too! Fall continues to undress as the leaves brown and drop. In most parts of the country, the weather starts getting cooler, if not cold, and we start worrying less about the yard and more about hunkering down for the winter months soon to come.

The song, *Over The River and Through the Woods* was originally a poem published in a children's collection by Lydia Maria Child (New England novelist, journalist, and poet who wrote extensively about the need to eliminate slavery) in 1844. This poem was about her excitement about visiting her grandfather (not grandmother as we alter the lyrics today) as a child.

Adulthood for many has brought understanding that this song was a Thanksgiving song, not a Christmas one but it is the memories prompted by "to Grandmother's house we go..." that trigger memorable entertainment opportunities. Think of all of the things that give you comfort: cozy fire, homey food and drinks, warmth, being with family, friends or community while sharing a meal, no fuss, sweaters, board games, apples, pie---fun! All of these descriptive words are the key components necessary for a great party. Put aside your over decorated plans for future Christmas parties and focus on COMFORT; your guests will not be disappointed.

- Since Thanksgiving usually includes family, why not focus on inviting friends and more distant relatives for this gathering?
- Consider a buffet table in a family room for this party, to make everyone comfortable, casual and you can take advantage of the fireplace, if there is one!
- Pile browned leaves, acorns and twinkle lights in the center of the buffet table to create an interesting, but cheap centerpiece.
- String more twinkle lights around the room to create a warm glow to enhance the mood.
- Ask your guests to wear their most comfy sweater OR bring their favorite afghan.
- Collect all the crocks/bowls you own to fill with either stew, chicken pot pie topped with puff pastry or mac & cheese.....all which can be prepared in advance.
- Don't forget the tea! Large mugs of an apple cinnamon tea or pumpkin spice flavored tea will be great to hold warming your hands as you and your guests chat.
- Baked caramel apple is a great dessert for a crowd.

- Make home-made marshmallows (easy!) and provide sticks to toast them in the fire. Include graham crackers and chocolate as part of your buffet table for s'mores.
- Ask your guests to bring board games or provide them to entertain everyone when there is a lull in conversation OR have 3 different games going at the same time, giving everyone a time limit to play THEN rotate players to another game, making it a game marathon.
- Don't forget to spread the warmth. Ask your guests to bring canned goods to be donated to a local charity when the party is over.

*Original Poem:*

*Over the river, and through the wood,  
To Grandfather's house we go:  
The horse knows the way to carry the sleigh  
Through the white and drifted snow.*

*Over the river, and through the wood,  
To Grandfather's house away!  
We would not stop for doll or top,  
for 'tis Thanksgiving Day.*



Kim Hendrickson, author of the *Tastefully Small* cookbook series, has been teaching for over 25 years. A regular instructor in assorted programs in the New York area, JCCFS in North Carolina and The North Folk School in Minnesota and a frequent speaker throughout the US. She has catered for The Travel Channel's Bizarre Food Show, No Taste Like Home in NC, The New York Metropolitan Opera, Penguin Repertory Theatre, and TV's "Slangman" David Burke. Please visit [salviapress.net](http://salviapress.net)



# CULTURE

## Introducing the World this Holiday Season

by Gail Henderson

It's okay to go down Memory Lane for the holidays, especially if you have traveled the world already. I've even been thinking of Old Florida memories lately, partly because I had a decade birthday this year and also because my Aunt Edith just turned 100. We took amazing tea trips together in the Panhandle, unforgettable because we shared them.

But now it's my turn to make some tea memories with the younger generation. And since it's unrealistic to travel the world with a soccer ball or a mermaid doll in search of tea experiences, I have decided to travel to my own dining room table, to revel in the young faces of my seven grandchildren around it.

Using my teapot collection gathered from trips all over the globe, we will share countries and teas. We will learn to look at the bottom of a cup to see where it was made, and if the famous crossed swords of Meissen should ever be found in a thrift store teacup, they will know to snatch it up. We'll taste a rooibos tea from S. Africa and name the animals that jump out at us from the three-dimensional teapot bought there. Or note the real gold that is hand-painted on some teacups from Prague, or show the clear glass cups Israelis drink from, or learn how to tell if a pot is for tea, coffee or chocolate.

We could play a "Guess Where I'm From" game with the other cups and pots, the older children helping the younger, or even play CHAI-Q, an international tea game.

By the time the holidays are over, even my three-year-old grandson will know what a samovar is. They will sip chamomile tea and enjoy warm scones! But more

importantly, they will enjoy a sense of family history and belonging—a wonderful gift all by itself-- one sociologists and doctors say promotes a child's emotional health and enables them to resist drug use.

You can go bowling and make a memory, but tea is just so much fun! (Tastes better, too!) And if my FREE international tea game called Chai-Q will help you make some family memories, just call me.

From my family to yours, Happy holidays!



*Gail Henderson connects people through her business - Love Your Neighborhood. She lives in Palmetto, Florida. Gail makes memories with her grandchildren and helps others make memories by giving away tea resources and information. Visit her website to learn more: [LoveYourNeighborhood.com](http://LoveYourNeighborhood.com) Or call 813-928-1166 for information and help. Photo credit: Martha DeWeese*



## Your Manners Matter® Minute with Cynthia Grosso

*Nationally and internationally,  
having the attitude of gratitude for the people around us  
speaks of who we are.*



### Etiquette Tip: Handwritten Notes



2020 has been the year that wasn't for a lot of things. Many have missed celebrations including holidays, graduations, proms, birthdays and so much more. So how will we reflect on our Thanksgiving season this November?

This year has been a tough year for many people in a multitude of ways, maybe even you. During times like these we may have people around us that have helped us through, with an empathetic ear, a helping hand, a strong shoulder, or a reassuring smile. There are so many ways we may have been encouraged or supported by our friends, family or our community.

This is a great time of the year to take it all in and make an intentional effort to appreciate others by reaching out to them in the form of a handwritten letter or note.

There are so many positive aspects of doing this. One great attribute is found in the neuroscience. Handwriting a letter or note to someone has profound positive effects on the brain not found in typing one. Handwriting a note stimulates activity that relaxes the brain and

releases feel good chemicals. It helps keep your brain sharp and stimulates creativity.

Nationally and internationally, having the attitude of gratitude for the people around us speaks of who we are. Sending a handwritten note to someone for something they have done for you or just because of who they are in your life, has profound effects on both the receiver and the sender.

Etiquette side note - Thank you stationary should not include preprinted thank you wording. Etiquette suggests those words are ones you handwrite yourself.



*Editor's note: Alongside the multi-cultural experience of tea, many tea lovers travel the world - to tea growing countries and to those places where tea is experienced in special ways. Updates to this wonderful feature page for manners, etiquette, and international protocol will help you in every situation around the world. Enjoy!*

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Cynthia Grosso is Founder of The Charleston School of Protocol and Etiquette. The Charleston School of Protocol and Etiquette specializes in helping people handle life's events and changes with style, polish and confidence. The Charleston School of Protocol and Etiquette teaches the skill of confidence to eliminate personal and professional barriers and live an extraordinary life.





# A Virtual Tea Party

Tea parties have been looking a little different these days, as many around the world are still under social distancing or “stay at home” orders. That doesn’t stop RHS members from enjoying tea time together though!

The Royal Order of the Drama Queens, based in California, USA, hold a gathering on Zoom once a month, giving each member of the group a turn to be the hostess. For this particular meeting, the theme was a tea party!

“We always have games and a presentation about our theme,” Queen Debbie shares. “Our hostess shared pictures of her vast personal tea set collection.”

The Drama Queens are thankful for the technology that is keeping them together during these unusual times, but are greatly looking forward to the day that they can meet in person again. “Until then, we are still very happy to have a way to see each other’s pretty faces,” says Queen Debbie.

Not even a global pandemic will stop Hatters from enjoying tea with one another!



*If you're looking to join a group of women who love getting together for a cup of tea, be it virtual for now and in-person later, join RHS today – visit [RedHatSociety.com](http://RedHatSociety.com) to get started!*



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# CONNOISSEUR James Norwood Pratt



## A Bright Day In Tea History



Bianca, along with her brother Brendan, in 2016 inherited International Tea Importers from their father my special friend Devan Shah. They are surely the youngest joint- CEO's of any major firm in the world-wide tea trade and Sebastian has already proved to be a principal asset in the business as well as a son-in-law in whom Devan would be well pleased. He and Bianca became sweet-hearts soon after they met as undergraduates at Rochester Institute of Technology, They were forced to cancel wedding plans until now. Now Sebastian's Latin American roots are firmly entwined with Bianca's Indian roots in the new name they have taken: Shah-Ospina.

Bianca Reena Shah and Sebastian Ospina were united in holy matrimony Sunday September Sixth on an outdoor terrace overlooking the San Francisco Bay. Cousin Shamila Mehta, tea media star Karter Lewis and Valerie Turner Pratt were present at the wedding ceremony conducted according to the Book of Common Prayer by James Norwood Pratt. Champagne flowed until the view disappeared in the fog: A bright day in tea history!



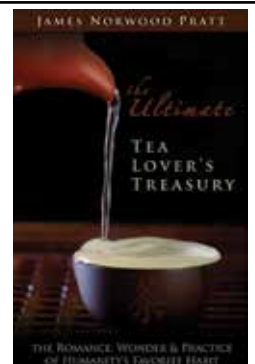
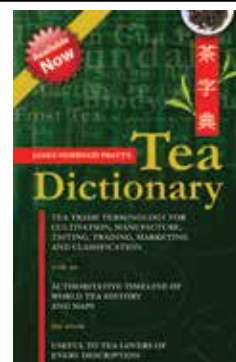
*James Norwood Pratt  
is acknowledged as America's Tea Sage.  
He is an award winning author and authority on tea.*  
Please visit

**JamesNorwoodPratt.com** for Norwood's schedule of appearances and to purchase his books.

**\*\*Do you have input or a question for Norwood?**

Send your question to [info@theteahousetimes.com](mailto:info@theteahousetimes.com)

*Find more of James Norwood Pratt's work at  
TeaCourse.com where learning never ends.*



# Scones

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While a rose by any other name may smell as sweet, it remains to be seen whether scones would have the same allure if we called them biscuits, or quick breads. A scone really is nothing more than a biscuit, but calling this delectable treat a scone immediately adds layer upon layer of history, tradition, and mystique to this morning or tea-time fare.

The term “scone”, used to refer to a small quick bread, was first seen in Scottish literature as early as 1513. Scones were originally made from oats, and baked as a circular mass of dough on a flat stone over an open fire. Scored into wedges prior to baking, it was then easy to divide up among all who were present for the meal.

As tools and baking methods improved, scones also evolved and changed. Today’s griddle scones are reminiscent of their earliest predecessor, being “baked” on a griddle on the stovetop. For those who have never eaten one of these, they most closely resemble a fresh English muffin—but after shaping the dough into a flat round mass, it is often pre-cut into wedges prior to baking.

Today’s scones are usually flour based, and oven baked. However, scones remain true to their origin in that they are a non-yeast quick bread, relying upon a leavening agent such as baking powder to allow them to rise.

Afternoon tea became a popular, daily treat during Victorian times and included scones, finger sandwiches and sweets. In the United States, where afternoon tea is a special event rather than a daily ritual, scones have found their way to the breakfast table, as well as the dinner and dessert tables.

Scones can be either plain—and dressed up with jams or curds; or they can have fruits, nuts, or chocolate added to the dough. Savory scones are most often seen accompanying an evening meal, and often have herbs or cheeses or pesto added to them.

So, what is it about a scone that makes it so alluring? Perhaps it is nothing more than the name—and the knowledge that this humble little biscuit has been a staple for hundreds of years.



*Reference & Photo Credit  
VictorianHouseScones.com*



## EATING A SCONE

If you have heard mention of a Cream Tea, you will know that this is when you enjoy your tea along with scones topped with strawberry jam and clotted cream.

There are two traditional English methods used in preparing the scone for cream tea. The Cornish Cream Tea method is when the scone is split in two, (sometimes spread with butter), followed by strawberry jam and topped with clotted cream. The Devonshire Tea method is when the scone is split in two, spread with clotted cream first (no butter) and topped with strawberry jam. The order of placement for clotted cream or strawberry jam is personal preference and prepared the same on each half and enjoyed separately - do not place the halves back together.

The Cornish Cream Tea method originated with the tradition of serving a Cornish Split - or warm soft roll - topped with butter, jam and cream. The term Devonshire originates with the county of Devon in England.

Modern Rules of Etiquette will tell you that it is improper to enjoy your scones this way and rather you should break off a small bite-size piece of the scone and spread with jam and top with cream. Perhaps the setting will determine your style of preparation, but most importantly take time to enjoy your scones!

# TEA IS POETRY POURED

By Susan Patterson aka Earlene Grey

“Inside my home it is safe and warm the way that homes are meant to be.” That is the first line of an early Earlene Grey poem, “The Cozy of My Cottage”. It came alive to me this past quarter. We in Oregon have had hundreds of forest fires. Thousands of homes were burned. Cities were burned off of the map. We had to evacuate our home and find other shelter. Friends took us in. Their home was safe and warm.

Most of us believe we are placed on this earth with a purpose. Many of us struggle to discover and to understand that purpose. I do. But here is a small insight. Surely part of everyone’s purpose is to help each other. To take refugees in. To feed the hungry. To take in a pet. To bring cheer to the lonely. To love the unlovable. Sometimes we accomplish these feats of purpose by actually physically doing the job. Sometimes we donate money. Sometimes we pay taxes. There are many ways to meet our purpose.

I am grateful for those people and programs of purpose who helped me along the way. From Social Security benefits after my father died in a logging accident, to college loans, to friends taking me in when a fire threatened my house. My prayer is that we all find our purpose and share it freely. Even more so in our holy days.

Your poet in Oregon, skp



## *The Cozy of My Cottage*

Inside my house it is  
Safe and warm,  
The way that homes are  
Meant to be.

No sharps of sticks  
Or blows of guns.  
Or faces we cannot see.

Fruit and cream are plenty  
With breads and buns to spare.  
The perpetual invitation is out,  
And I am set,  
Ready with tea to share.

Earlene Grey

## *And I Will Blanket You*

It is winter and time for hibernation.  
Turn your back to the wind.  
Lean low and feel the  
Earth cooling,  
Resting from delivery.  
Another year will come and her  
Returning warmth will waken us.  
But right now, let us bide,  
Lie down and slumber at her side.

Earlene Grey



Susan Patterson is an unexpected author. She did not put writing into her life’s plan. However, after a demanding and busy career in business, much to her surprise, poetry came to her. Ms. Patterson is an author of the heart and writer for the soul. Her work, it has been said, is so sharp, so intricate; it is like a Fabergé egg. Ms. Patterson’s worldwide audience declares her writing to be in the top caliber of modern poets. Her work, which ranges from humorous to thoughtfully intelligent, is always quietly compelling. Please visit [EarleneGrey.com](http://EarleneGrey.com)



## Highland Lake Inn

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This gentleman's farmhouse originally built in 1767 is located in Andover, NH, a stone's throw from Highland Lake, a pristine, spring-fed mountain lake with beach. The Highland Lake Inn is conveniently situated in the center of Northern New England, 4 miles from renowned Proctor Academy, 10 miles from Ragged Mountain Ski Resort, and 20 miles from New Hampshire's capital, Concord.

New Hampshire's White Mountains, Vermont's Green Mountains, the Maine Coast, and the city of Boston are all within a two hour car ride. Kayak and bicycle rental is available on premises. Innkeepers are fluent in French, German, and some Spanish. The Highland Lake



Inn also serves readily as a gathering place for reunions, weddings, business retreats or family and holiday gatherings as well as teas and high teas that many local organizations take advantage of. Savor the vistas of neighboring Highland Lake, Kearsarge Mountain, and enjoy the Inn's own 7-acre grounds which adjoin a 21-acre nature preserve.



More than 25 years ago our friend John Harney made the decision to found Harney & Sons Fine Teas. Harney is committed to offering the finest teas, and as proof of that achievement, Harney & Sons Teas has been awarded "the best Tea served in England" by the British Tea Council for the past four years. Harney's love of tea has spread worldwide, and the Harneys know that we too have an appreciation of their perfect teas.

Through our partnership with ALP - Association of Lodging Professionals, their member Bed & Breakfasts/Inns/Boutique Hotels are featured in every issue of *The Tea House Times*. All ALP member innkeepers receive a digital subscription and may share it as an amenity to guests. ALP's non-innkeeper members include future innkeepers, retired innkeepers, vendor affiliates, and lodging associations - all receive *The Tea House Times* digital subscription to discover the inns that will welcome them with tea time and hospitality, and that

also will enhance their personal knowledge and enjoyment of tea. Innkeepers who choose membership in ALP are committed to high standards of hospitality through continuing education on management, marketing, and exceeding guest expectations. ALP's membership includes hundreds of innkeepers in the US, and is seasoned with innkeepers outside of the US borders. ALP is delighted to acquaint *The Tea House Times* readers with the historic mansions, rustic lodges, intimate cottages, contemporary inns, and more, with innkeepers that offer tea service. To discover more about ALP, visit [www.ALPLodging.org](http://www.ALPLodging.org)



# IN GOOD TASTE

## Tea and Food by Birendra “Jopy” Perera

Food and drink are at the center of all our lives. We work to earn a living in order to be able to feed ourselves, nourish ourselves and thus a basic need has turned into a basic luxury. We all want to give ourselves the best, and so it is natural, as humans who strive for everything to be better, that we would want to add value to our day to day lives. Enjoying your food with your favorite tea, then, is an affordable luxury, and one we can enjoy repeatedly, without feeling too much of a pinch on our expenses. Finding the perfect drink to complement our food is as important as finding the right kind of food for us. This is applicable to simple snacking as well as a fully blown five course meal. The best part is we don't have to break the bank to do it. Unlike other beverages, which limits our abilities and inhibitions, tea can be enjoyed and we can go back to our day to day lives without any hindrance. This makes meal times even more attractive.

There is however, the power of selection and the power of choice. As millennials we have come to learn that we can amalgamate these two extremes which were once defined by norms of society. For example back in the day high tea meant having your tea in a rather “British” manner of tea drinking, with milk and sugar etc. Today however, you could choose anything from a green tea, to a regional first flush black tea picked during season, or a specialty tea which has been hand rolled or simply an herbal beverage if we want to avoid caffeine; the choice is limitless and it is the consumers' prerogative.

Let us take a closer look at pairing our food and tea.

Often savory food is best enjoyed with a taste profile which is robust to wash it down with. And hence if the taste note is somewhat spicy, or heavily laden with condiment one may choose a deeper heavier notation of black tea such as an Assam from India or a Dimbulla region tea from Sri Lanka. We could however change the game here and go further east to a tea that could be in-between such as an Oolong, which is the center point of black and green tea identified as a semi oxidized tea, this is heavy enough to cleanse the strong flavours of the savory yet delicate enough to not overpower the senses and leave the tongue in a state of confusion. These recommendations would suffice for a quick meal or a mid-day snack as well.

For those who enjoy the fruits of the ocean it must be said that seafood has a very prominent taste profile and hence if one is enjoying courses made of different types involving crustaceans to fish to mollusks then it is imperative that you have a light brewed black tea, preferably with hints of flavour such as bergamot, tangerine and lemongrass to cleanse the palate and prepare for the next course. This cleansing is important in order to have a clean slate for the next round of taste to sweep over ones taste buds.

Those who enjoy meats must pay special attention to the flavours they are used to. Meat flavours often use some basic flavour profiles to marinade. For example lamb with rosemary and mint, beef with heavy onion, pork with caramelized pineapple or apple sauce and chicken with pan gravy. With each of these taste profiles it is important to ride a wave of taste which will cleanse your tongue but to not defy the taste you are already enjoying. Hence it would be advisable then to have an iced palate cleansing tea for each type; mint or herbal tea for lamb, Matale region black tea from Sri Lanka for beef and a simple light Nuwara-Eliya from Sri Lanka for pork and chicken. These are, of course, suggestions. One can always go to their preferred tea which works for them too.

Moving from savory to sweet, it is often best to be very delicate as sweetness has fewer tendencies to linger on the tongue and palate and hence we must tread cautiously. Often a lighter brewing tea is best. For the gourmand who enjoys chocolate, which in itself is a robust taste a slightly heavier medium strength tea such as a smoky Lapsang, or traditional Gun Powder Green tea would do. For the experienced foodie though, a black tea could also suffice; a Sabaragamuwa Region tea from Sri Lanka may do the trick in this instance – full bodied yet light.

Whatever the choices may be, the most essential combination is to enjoy your food and tea with love and company. Nothing makes meal time more enjoyable than the people we decide to spend time with.

Till next time, enjoy your tea in good taste.



Birendra Perera grew up in a family business through which he engrained or “infused” himself in the art of selecting and tasting the finest teas of Sri Lanka. As a director of Mlesna Group, Birendra leads the marketing and export of tea; actively participates in the procurement of tea at public auctions; procures unique flavours and ingredients; and expertly carries out daily tea tasting and blending activities ensuring all Mlesna products match their tagline, “Naturally the best!” Birendra has worked with major universities; is a regular presenter; and works closely with the Colombo Tea Traders Association and the Sri Lanka Tea Board on promotion, authenticity and the global marketing of Pure Ceylon Tea from Sri Lanka. **MlesnaTeas.com**

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